

Gretch and Gretch (*Kingbird* 35: 254-255) rightly predicted that in the state south of Clinton County Hooded Mergansers would start egg laying earlier than 16 April. This Cattaraugus County Hooded Merganser probably laid her first egg on 30 March if we assume her to lay one egg per day and to start incubation after the last egg was laid 7 April. Johnsgard and Kear, in a review of parental carrying of waterfowl, (*Living Bird* 7: 89-102; 1968) cited accounts from Bent (*Life Histories of North American Waterfowl*, 1923) of female Hooded Mergansers carrying young in the bill but not carrying young on the back while swimming. We were not able to determine whether the female ate the egg shells or carried them away but they were missing the evening of nest leaving.

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NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

A Wilson's Storm-Petrel Sighting from Rockland Co., New York: At 6:00 p.m. on the afternoon of August 18, 1986, as Tropical Storm (nee Hurricane) Charlie passed off Long Island, I sighted a Wilson's Storm-Petrel in the Tappan Zee north of Piermont Pier. The air was clear, with excellent visibility as the humidity had dropped during the afternoon to 55%. The sky was equally blue and clouded with dramatic bands of cumulus leftovers from the storm. The wind was steady from the northeast at about 25 mph, raising a goodly chop but no waves or swell. The sun was shining brightly on the portion of the river where I observed the bird.

I was returning from the end of the Pier and had come west about one-third of a mile (*ergo*, I was about two-thirds of a mile out on the Pier). I had been scanning gulls, cormorants, and swallows, using both my B&L 7x35 binoculars and my gun-stock (Bushhawk mount) mounted BalScope telescope at about 30x. What appeared at first glance to be a large, dark, slow-moving swallow proved to be a storm-petrel: all black with long, pointed wings, bright-white rump patch, **rounded** tail, and even a glimpse of yellow webbing in the feet that trailed through the water from time to time.

The bird was 75 to 100 feet north of the Pier in excellent light when first sighted; the sun was at a low angle, which is probably why I could see that bit of yellow in the webbing. It flew with the typical "butterfly-like" hovering, contentedly picking at bits of flotsam or plankton (or whatever is floating on the Hudson). It was moving slowly eastward (to the right as I faced north) at first, reversed direction, then gradually and erratically flew north, still feeding, until out of sight near the Tappan Zee Bridge. The total viewing time was 10 minutes. I am familiar with the species after 30 or 40 summer pelagic trips into the Atlantic.

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